

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is the film *The Debilitator* about?**

*The Debilitator* tells the story of Calvin Dixon, an African American man with neglected diabetes who has a bad dream about dying of a heart attack. When he wakes up, his fears prompt him to tell his family about his diabetes and to get help in dealing with his diabetes and taking proper care of himself. Diabetes can be a “debilitator” in that it can wear down, or debilitate, a person’s energy, health, and well-being, but it doesn’t have to. One can beat “the debilitator.” As Calvin Dixon says, “I’m going to beat the odds.”

### **What is the discussion guide all about?**

The discussion guide contains materials that show facilitators how to lead a discussion among a small group of people (for example, a support group, a diabetes class, a church group, or a “lunch-and-learn” session at work) about the events in the film. The guide contains 13 modules on different topics drawn from Calvin Dixon’s story. The final module is a communications training module for health care providers to help them understand more about what their patients are experiencing.

### **Lots of videos and booklets about diabetes are available nowadays. How are these materials different?**

By telling the story of one man and how he deals with learning that he has diabetes, *The Debilitator* connects emotionally with the audience. The discussion guide focuses on the emotions that Calvin Dixon experiences, how he shares his feelings with his family, and how he interacts with his doctor.

### **This film is about an African American man and his family. The people in the group I’ll lead may not be African American. Do the film and discussion guide still apply to them?**

Yes. Human emotions are universal. This story focuses on an African American man, but the emotional issues and lessons learned apply to all of us. It might be worthwhile for your group to talk about how some things in the

film might be expressed differently in your family, your culture, or your community group.

**I am a Diabetes Educator. How can I use this film?**

As a diabetes educator, you have a fundamental role in providing and teaching diabetes self-management. You can use *The Debilitator* film and discussion guide in a variety of settings (e.g., clinics, community organizations, support groups, diabetes retreats) to help your clients

- Acknowledge the emotional aspects of diabetes and how they can hinder or support diabetes self-care.
- Better understand the importance of diabetes care and self-management.
- Formulate a plan for adopting diabetes self-care behaviors.

**I am the program director/coordinator of the state Diabetes Prevention and Control Program (DPCP). How can I use this material?**

DPCPs can work collaboratively with communities, municipalities, regions, clinics, health insurance companies, churches, and hospitals, among others, to address the many facets of diabetes, such as risk factors and the connection between diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. Settings in which DPCPs can use *The Debilitator* and the discussion guide are

- ✓ **Coalitions.** Support and foster the development of coalitions to address diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.
- ✓ **Diabetes Education and Training Programs for Professionals.** Provide opportunities to promote best practices and standards of care among those responsible for providing medical care to people living with diabetes.
- ✓ **Provider Education.**
  1. **Patient Education Tools**—Distribute the film to providers and professionals statewide, or hold luncheon meetings to discuss the film.

2. **Continuing Education Unit (CEU)**—Provide educational training sessions on the emotional impact of living with diabetes and on ways to improve communications between health care providers and people living with diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.

**Note:** The NDEP does not provide continuing medical education (CME) or CEU credit, but your organization may find that these discussion modules fit into already scheduled and approved CEU/CME programs.

- ✓ **Clinic Support for Indigent Diabetes Care.**
- ✓ **Public Education Activities.**
- ✓ **Health Care Systems.** Provide training, support, and resources for primary care centers to improve diabetes care.
- ✓ **Community Interventions.** Use the discussion guide in churches and in other community settings to promote wellness, physical activity, and weight and blood pressure control for people with diabetes.

**I am a business owner. What does this discussion guide have to offer me?**

Poorly controlled diabetes has a huge effect on your most important resource: your employees. Investing in improved diabetes control can pay off in heightened productivity, decreased absenteeism, lower medical costs, and healthier retirees. Many businesses already have wellness coordinators or occupational health nurses who could lead discussion groups. Smaller businesses that may not have these personnel may have a few employees who would be willing to lead these discussions as “brown bag” lunch sessions. More information and suggestions for things that you as a business owner can do to help prevent and control diabetes among your employees can be found at <http://www.diabetesatwork.org>.

**I work at a community college. Can we use this material in our adult enrichment courses?**

Yes, you may use the NDEP discussion guide. All NDEP materials are in the public domain, so you can photocopy

and use any of these materials without concern about copyright infringement. You may add other materials or adapt these materials to your needs for an adult enrichment course, and you may put your logo on the materials alongside the NDEP logo. You must contact Millennium Filmworks for information on the rights to show the film.

**I run a clinic (or I am a hospital administrator). How can I use this material?**

The modules in this discussion guide can be used in training health care providers to improve communication with their patients. Consider showing the film and leading a discussion at a noontime conference or at a weekly CME event. Improved communications between health care providers and patients have been noted to reduce lawsuits and to enhance clinical care. You might even consider holding discussions that bring patients and providers together as a learning experience for both groups. The final module, a communications training module, has been specially designed to help health care providers understand more about what their patients are experiencing.

**Note:** As stated earlier, the NDEP does not provide CME or CEU credit, but your organization may find that these discussion modules fit into already scheduled and approved CEU/CME programs.

For additional information on diabetes, go to the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services diabetes web page at <http://www.dhss.mo.gov/diabetes>.

**I want to lead a group, but I don't know that much about diabetes. Will this film and accompanying guide give me all the facts that I need to know about the disease?**

Some facts about diabetes are presented, but you don't need to have extensive knowledge of diabetes to lead a group. (For a list of common medical terms related to diabetes, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pubs/tcyd/appendix.htm>.) Most of the material in the discussion guide is focused on emotions and behavior—how people can recognize the emotions that stop them from doing the things that are healthy for them, and what they can do to change. If at all possible, invite a medical person (health care provider or certified diabetes educator) to participate in any sessions that you conduct to provide support for the discussion and to answer any specific medical questions that may arise.

**I have diabetes and want to learn more about it, and perhaps even lead a discussion, but I don't have a diabetes support group, and I don't go to diabetes education classes. Where can I use this material?**

You can use the film and discussion guide anywhere that people get together. You can show the film at a community event, such as a health fair, and then choose one module to discuss. Or you can simply get family and friends together as a group. You may want to ask your local hospital, clinic, or American Diabetes Association (ADA) chapter to help you organize a group. Your state Diabetes Prevention and Control Program may know of programs in your areas or may help you start a program. Refer to the contact list for DPCPs in this discussion guide kit. Or visit <http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes> for the most up-to-date contact list for your state.

The Missouri Diabetes Prevention and Control Program is providing copies of most of the handouts referenced in this guide, but not included with the sessions, in the Handouts section at the end of this guide.

*The Debilitator* film can be borrowed through the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services Audio Visual Program. See note on page 4 of this guide.

**What do I need to do to hold a discussion group? How do I get started?**

Most written materials needed to hold a discussion group are included in this guide. (Some materials for the sessions must be downloaded from the Internet or ordered from the NDEP.) The film *The Debilitator* can be obtained from Millennium Filmworks at <http://www.millenniumfilmworksinc.org>. The discussion guide and other NDEP materials are available free of charge. Download them from the National Diabetes Education Program Web site <http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/ndep>, order them online from <http://www.ndep.nih.gov>, or order them by phone by calling 1-800-438-5383.

**Where do I go for more information?**

Refer to the References and Resources section at the back of this discussion guide.

